



North Bay & District Multicultural Centre
Timmins & District Multicultural Centre

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



Thank you to our funders

The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre and the Timmins & District Multicultural Centre wish to gratefully acknowledge operational funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

Additional funding from the City of North Bay, Timmins Economic Development Corporation, District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board, NOHFC, Trillium Foundation and FedNor is much appreciated. We also thank those who chose to make charitable donations to us in the past year.

Thank
YOU



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North Bay

Deborah Robertson, Executive Director
Vindra Sahadeo, Program Coordinator
Imane Meddah, LIP Coordinator
Maryline Pillet, Settlement Worker & Volunteer Coordinator
Taslina Ahmed, Settlement Worker
Tara Gillies, Office Manager
Ziyaad Rajabalee, English Language Practice Lead
Marly Hill, Welcoming Communities
Ashley McLaren, Canada Connects

Timmins

Mike Scott, LIP Coordinator
Tanvi Prajapati, Settlement Worker & Volunteer Coordinator
Bincy Kurian, Welcoming Communities Coordinator

www.nbdmc.ca

www.timminsmulticultural.ca



A Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors

The year of 2020 was unforgettable for many reasons. An outbreak early in the year of a previously unknown virus (soon-termed COVID-19) led to an unprecedented shutdown of our global economy, countries, and societies across the planet. The resulting crisis separated and divided families, friends, and neighbours - both physically and metaphorically.

The disruption also afforded us extra time to reflect on what matters, and to reimagine the ways we can build back better, by supporting the development of happier, healthier, and more inclusive communities right here in northeastern Ontario.

At the time of writing this Board Chair Report (early May 2021) the Province of Ontario remains in lockdown. With vaccines now being rolled out many are asking the question: *'What comes next?'*

We really wish we had a crystal ball here - but in the absence of one - we will continue to play our role providing unconditional care and support to our clients, volunteers, and community partners across each community served. For 'multiculturalism' (in all its forms) has enormous potential to be a 'healer' in the world right now. By working in partnership, and learning from one another, we can restore our collective faith and trust in the world - and successfully navigate our way out of this crisis together.

The Board of Directors of the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre wishes to say a special **Thank You** to our committed staff in North Bay and Timmins for your hard-work, resilience, and the strength of character you have shown helping others this past year.

The following provides a summary of Board activity in 2020:

- **Creation of a Spatial Needs Sub-Committee**
Recognizing that program delivery could change significantly in the years to come, the Board of Directors introduced a Spatial Needs Sub-committee with a view to researching and evaluating our current and projected future needs. This work will continue throughout 2021 including a request for ideas and feedback on behalf of our clients, volunteers, community partners, plus other potential building / service users.

- **Deborah Robertson was elected as the Northern Regional Director** to the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) Board of Directors in September.

Deborah's election is testament to the leadership she has shown in recent years navigating the growing newcomer and immigration landscape here in Northern Ontario.

Going forward, our Multicultural Centre and the communities we serve will have a much stronger voice at the table by helping identify regional needs in relation to OCASI program areas including: Sectoral Development, Policy & Research, Public Education & Communications.

- **Building extra capacity within our Board of Directors**

With the pandemic having caused the deferral of our AGM to September 2020, the decision was taken during the summer to review and assess the skills of our current Board, and seek new/additional ones, with complementary skillsets - to help us achieve our organizational goals and vision in the years to come.

As the Fall came around, we said goodbye to one board member Susan Pratt (thank you again Susan for your time with us) and recruited an additional four **new members** as follows:

- Bimpe Agboola, Architect - North Bay
- Dean Lessard, Northern College - Timmins
- Moustapha Kori-M'bami, Newmont -Timmins
- Mira Hotte, Nipissing University Student Union (NUSU) - North Bay

Our new members have made a great addition to the team as a whole, and have already brought some great ideas, perspectives, and suggestions to the virtual table.

We look forward to further uniting as a team to deliver results in the months and years to come.

Yours Sincerely

S Blakeley



A Message from our Executive Director 2020

In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it. Marianne Williamson

It is impossible to reflect on 2020 without recognizing the immense challenges brought about by the global pandemic. COVID-19 continues to shape our daily lives and those of the communities we serve.

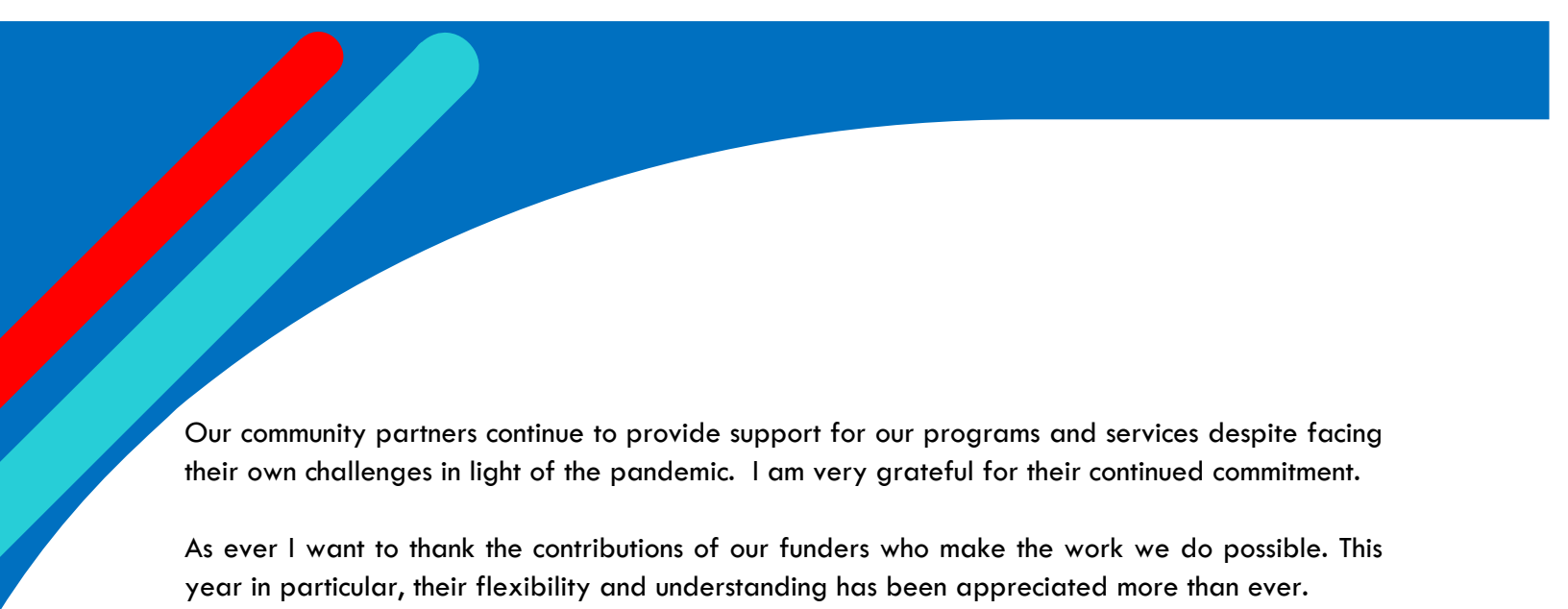
Staff have shown admirable resilience in the face of unprecedented change. Whether working from home, working in the office or juggling a hybrid of both, staff have continually prioritized client service above all and I am proud of the dedication they have shown. I feel very fortunate to have such committed and compassionate people around me as we continue to navigate these unpredictable times.

Despite the challenging circumstances, we have welcomed many new staff and begun several new programs in 2020. The Ontario Trillium Foundation Grow Grant in Timmins is a three-year project, aimed at reducing social isolation of newcomers to the area. The Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada funded Canada Connects program is also new to the Centre this year. Canada Connects provides volunteer matches for immigrants to support their timely integration. We have welcomed a Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation intern to further our ability to provide targeted settlement supports to all newcomers to our area.

Providing remote services has led to new and exciting initiatives, such as a virtual book club for youth. Taking these opportunities to adapt our programming allows us to grow and develop as an agency.

2020 has brought many social issues to the forefront. The need for anti-racism training has once more been brought into sharp focus. With a trained Equity and Inclusion facilitator on staff, we have been able to respond on a local level with urgently needed training within our area.

Our Board of Directors' saw a change in membership this year after several long standing members completed their final term. I want to thank Board members old and new for their commitment and support to the Centre over the year.



Our community partners continue to provide support for our programs and services despite facing their own challenges in light of the pandemic. I am very grateful for their continued commitment.

As ever I want to thank the contributions of our funders who make the work we do possible. This year in particular, their flexibility and understanding has been appreciated more than ever.

Deborah Robertson



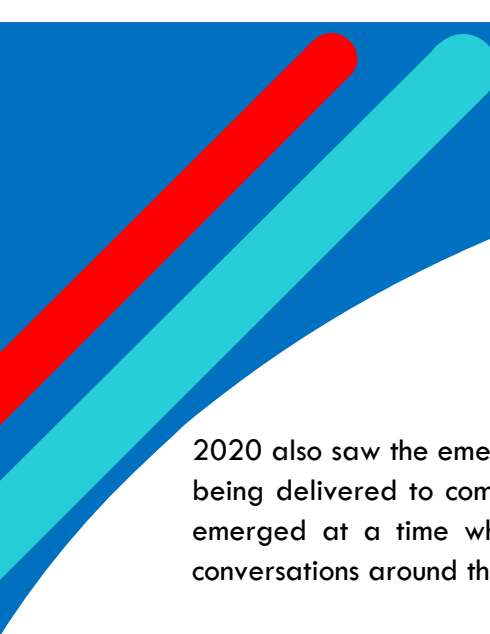
A Message from our Program Coordinator 2020

As we strive to attract and retain highly educated and skilled workers to our region, and build a welcoming and inclusive Northern Ontario, the question we should be asking is “Why do we expect these people to give up high paying, mid-career positions in their country to come here and be happy with the scraps from the table?”

The year 2020 was in many ways a year like no other in my lifetime. It started off with exciting plans for our new Empowering Women Catering project, a pilot of the Settlement department, funded by DNSSAB. Our department was very enthused about this opportunity to allow clients to showcase their cultural foods in a manner that would earn them community respect and income. Vijanti, along with student placement Megan and volunteers Heidi and Kaitlyn were phenomenal in their initial direction of this project and with the support of the entire organization the project was a resounding success. Taslima and Maryline, with their vast settlement service experience, served as the backbone and sounding board for the project while Megan, Ashley and Marly along with our dedicated volunteers Heidi, Julie and Kaitlyn, navigated the day to day challenges and ensured ultimate success. The pandemic, though it presented some initial delays and creative modifications, did not negatively impact the success of the project. We thank the community for their unwavering support of this project.

As we moved through the year and adjusted our way of doing things in light of the pandemic, our creativity and flexibility in service delivery morphed from initially being unused to working from our dining rooms at home to getting quite comfortable. Just as we mastered this shift we were summoned back to the office and again just as we got used to working from the office once again we were back to working from home. This did in fact play a major role in sustaining our flexibility and creativity in meeting the needs of our clients through the pandemic roller-coaster. The dedication, compassion and professionalism of our settlement staff ensured uninterrupted service to our clients.

As the year progressed, rapid staff changes in the settlement department led to us having the good fortune of engaging the services of some really amazing young people like Ashley, Marly, Tanvi and Bincy and to bring Maryline, our seasoned settlement worker, back on board permanently.



2020 also saw the emergence of our much needed and well received anti-racism training modules being delivered to community agencies in our catchment area. This was very timely indeed as it emerged at a time when our community seemed genuinely ready to have the uncomfortable conversations around the pervasive racism that exists in our community.

As we strive for a more inclusive Northern Ontario, we must continuously remind ourselves of the role we currently play and the role we need to play in interrupting both interpersonal and institutional racism. It requires each and every one of us taking full responsibility to do our part in the spaces that we occupy. We need to each take that long, deep, soul searching look within and question the values and beliefs systems that we verbally claim as our own, to determine how our claims are aligned with our everyday interactions with BIPOC people and the messages that any discrepancy between our words and actions might be sending. It took centuries of racist history to get us to the place we are today. It would not be dismantled by reading one book or by taking one course but by a deep and genuine commitment to continually educating ourselves on the harm that we do in cross racial interactions and to work every day at dismantling racism in our spaces.

Vindra Sahadeo- Program Coordinator/Equity and Inclusion Facilitator



Un message de notre conseillère en établissement

“Le changement va venir. Il faut être patient et ne jamais abandonner. N’abandonnez jamais”.
Wanda Robson (Viola Desmond’s Sister)

Faisant désormais partie de l’équipe du Centre multiculturel de façon permanente, je m’efforce avec mes collègues, de faciliter l’accès aux services aux nouveaux immigrants dans leur nouvelle communauté. En cette année 2020, plutôt particulière nous nous sommes efforcés de continuer à offrir nos services sans interruption. Nous avons multiplié nos efforts afin de satisfaire à toutes les demandes et que personne ne se sente encore plus isolé par des problèmes que nous pouvions aider à résoudre. Nous savons que la crise sanitaire a fragilisé bon nombre de nos clients, c’est pour cela que nous leur avons laissé la parole sur les média sociaux.

Le partenariat, le renforcement des capacités et la lutte contre la discrimination ont ponctué cette année particulière.

Nous continuons de travailler avec tous nos partenaires de la communauté. Je mettrai l’accent, en qualité d’agente francophone, sur la collaboration active avec les institutions francophones qui désirent s’impliquer davantage auprès des immigrants. Le Réseau d’immigration francophone du Nord de l’Ontario facilite beaucoup la communication entre les diverses institutions.

Le deuxième point que je voudrais mentionner est cette belle aventure de soutien aux femmes immigrantes que le projet de restauration nous a permis de vivre et qui a fait rayonner le Centre multiculturel dans la communauté, son succès montre le désir du public d’aller à la rencontre d’autres cultures.

Enfin il est évident que 2020 restera une année que de tristes événements auront poussé le public et les institutions à réfléchir encore et encore à la lutte contre la discrimination raciale et toute discrimination au sens large.

Maryline Pillet



A Message from our Settlement Worker (North Bay)

“Change is gonna come. We have to be patient. Never give up. Never give up”.
Wanda Robson (Viola Desmond’s Sister)

Now a permanent part of the Multicultural Center team, I work with my colleagues to facilitate access to services for new immigrants in their new community. In this rather special year 2020, we have made every effort to continue to offer our services without interruption. We have stepped up our efforts to accommodate all requests and make sure no one feels more isolated by issues that we can help solve. We know that the health crisis has weakened many of our clients and that's why we let them speak on social media.

Partnership, capacity building and the fight against discrimination punctuated this particular year. We continue to work with all of our community partners. As a Francophone agent, I will focus on active collaboration with Francophone institutions that wish to become more involved with immigrants. The

Northern Ontario Francophone Immigration Network greatly facilitates communication between the various institutions.

The second point that I would like to mention is this great adventure of supporting immigrant women that the restoration project has enabled us to experience and which has made the Multicultural Centre shine in the community. Its success shows the desire of the public to meet and get to know people from other cultures.

Finally, it is obvious that 2020 will remain a year of sad events that have prompted the public and institutions to reflect again and again on the fight against racial discrimination and all discrimination in the broad sense.

Maryline Pillet



A Message from our Settlement Worker (North Bay)


*“If you find it in your heart to care for somebody else, you will have succeeded”
- Maya Angelou*

As with many other non-profit organizations, the biggest challenge we faced this year was the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and its effects on our community and the whole world. The Coronavirus pandemic has altered how we have traditionally traveled, worked, celebrated, and communicated. The North Bay & District Multicultural Centre had to periodically suspend all in-person services. While closing our front door, we were leading the way in virtual service delivery models, ensuring the needs of clients were met and maintained by telephone or online during this challenging time.

We continue to welcome each newcomer client to the area with a settlement intake, needs assessment and personalized settlement plan. This informs and directs future services, including information and orientation for life in Canada, interpretation, and referrals to external services for which they are eligible. Our work as a team gives the diverse populations we serve the best possible settlement experience through one-on-one, family, and group-based program delivery. The past year was a busy and exciting one for us as we have two new staff through Canada Connects and Welcoming Community.

There is a lack of services in our vicinity for temporary residents. Our goal at the Multicultural Centre is to ensure that our door is open to everyone; therefore, we have diversified funding to provide services to all. We are able to work with temporary residents to provide referrals and guidance on settlement topics, information and orientation and navigating challenges with immigration forms such as temporary residency renewals and permanent residency applications, as well as providing guidance to access information about family reunification for Canadian citizens who want to bring family members to the area.

Our events took a different shape this year amid pandemic. We celebrated Christmas differently. Since we couldn't have a Christmas party, we had gifts for children to be picked up and had a great turnout. The Empowering Women Catering Project cooking events were continued successfully. We switched the event from dine-in to takeout and it was well-received by the community.



The resilience of our staff, our clients and volunteers and the community should be commended. Like the rest of the province, we are now turning our thoughts to how we will return to our office. Our number one priority remains the well-being and safety of our colleagues, community, and clients, which means taking a cautious and thoughtful approach.

We look forward to meeting the challenge of helping an increasing number of newcomers settle and integrate in the community. We will continue to provide the information, support, and services they need in a professional manner, with compassionate, caring people who possess the much needed lived experience and can relate to our clients' struggles; all in a safe environment. The year ahead will hopefully bring a return to a relatively normal life with some important lessons learned along the way on an individual, family, professional, community, and global level. Our focus is to ensure the long-term sustainable growth of the organization to meet the ever-changing needs of our newcomers.

Taslima Ahmed



A Message from our Settlement Worker (Timmins)

“Community service gives me a valuable opportunity to walk into a different community that is less familiar to me but just as colorful and most importantly, in need.” – Caroline Landry


I am truly honoured to be a part of such a fabulous team. I joined this organization two months ago. With the pandemic, these two months have been a roller coaster ride for me.

I came to this country last year, so as an Immigrant I understand the many difficulties an immigrant has to face in a new community. I am obliged to this organization for giving me this opportunity where I can share my experience with many people who are facing the same situation that I already faced. I also came across many challenges that I have never experienced before. However, today I am guiding a number of clients and it is such a satisfying experience.

The settlement process is unique to each person with their personal circumstances, so we (settlement workers) assist clients at all four stages in the process: arrival days, acclimatization, adaptation and integration. I noticed the common needs of immigrants were job search assistance, accessing government services and benefits, citizenship and immigration services, housing, language training, translation and interpretation, rights and responsibilities, and access to local community services.

I had the opportunity to build relationships with a number of wonderful clients, existing and new, through face-to-face meetings, emails, phones and video conference. Clients have been patient with me while I gathered the information to fulfil their needs. I liaised with many community service providers such as Employment Options, Professions North/Nord, Porcupine Health Unit, Timmins Learning Centre, and South Porcupine Library in accessing services for our clients. Currently my work includes participation on the COVID-19 Community response table to support vulnerable populations with the Porcupine Health Unit.

Due to COVID-19, we were unable to plan any in-person client events. However, Bincy (Welcoming Communities Coordinator at Timmins office) and I, were able to organize a Christmas event in which we distributed gifts to our clients' children. It was indeed a great experience to connect with our many clients from different cultures and learn more about them. I look forward to organizing more client focused events in the coming months.



My colleagues at the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre have been a great source of support to me. I would like to express my special thanks to Vindra, Taslima and Maryline for always stepping in to guide me with any challenging client dilemmas. This organization has encouraged my professional development and allowed me to vastly expand my knowledge base in a short period of time. It's a wonderful experience to be a part of this organization.

Tanvi Prajapati



A Message from our North Bay Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator

*“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”
-Henry Ford*

North Bay Local Immigration Partnership (NBLIP) had an engaging and productive year in 2020. Despite the challenges brought by the current pandemic, it successfully adapted its work to the realities of COVID-19. Although the approach remained the same, the focus shifted to rallying with and reaching out to partners and immigration stakeholders to explore new ways in opening communication channels, sharing information between different local organizations, identifying gaps and aligning existing services, especially those focused on building a welcoming community here in North Bay.

During the year of 2020, NBLIP participated in a total of 56 community and committee activities, networking sessions, information sharing and planning at conferences, and virtual gatherings.

One of the main priorities for NBLIP throughout 2020 was to engage with community partners to raise awareness of the heightened vulnerability of some community members during the COVID-19 crisis. The global pandemic has left no community untouched. NBLIP participated in a roundtable for recipients of the Emergency Fund for Community Support in the Nipissing-Timiskaming region attended by Minister *Ahmed Hussen* and Speaker *Anthony Rota* as well as several community partners. This was a unique opportunity to share and understand some of the lived realities radicalized and diverse members of our community faced during the pandemic.

NBLIP also reinforced its ties with the local francophone community by participating in the 8th edition of National Francophone Immigration Week by organizing a virtual round table. This initiative was an opportunity to continue to raise awareness of the reality of immigrating to small northern communities while promoting the diversity of cultures, ethnicities and histories acquired through immigration to these regions.

NBLIP is looking forward to continue playing an important role in opening communication channels, sharing information between different local organizations, identifying gaps and aligning existing services, especially those focused on building a welcoming community here in North Bay. For the upcoming year, we are looking forward to introducing a dedicated website along with social media handles.

Imane Meddah



A Message from our Timmins Local Immigration Partnership Coordinator

“Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller


It was another great year of collaboration, integration and welcoming for the Timmins Local Immigration Partnership. We were able to pivot a long-standing community event, launch a new ESL Pilot program and joined a handful of community projects.

We started the year off with the Come North Planning Conference in February, where hundreds of service providers and key stakeholders from across the region came together in Temiskaming Shores. The aim was to develop an asset map for the region and devise a population growth strategy that would benefit all of our communities.

Unfortunately, some events that were scheduled for March to May i.e. New Canadians TV episode production and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, had to be either cancelled or postponed. The Multicultural Society even had to cancel their festival for the first time in 49 years.

On the bright side, COVID-19 forced us to double-down on our collaboration with the other Northern Ontario LIPs. We quickly realized that we were much stronger together and began meeting on a weekly basis. The partnership between the Northern LIPs is rather informal but highly effective. We have collectively looked over our deliverables and tried to find ways to synergize. We are now looking at creating an MOU between the five Northern LIPs that would formalize and structure the partnership.

After the unjust death of George Floyd and so many other black, indigenous, people of colour, TLIP decided that something needed to be done to provide an outlet for people who have experienced racism and discrimination in our community. We partnered with TDMC, OPSEU’s Provincial Human Rights Committee and the Canadian Council of Muslim Women to form Timmins is Listening. This social media initiative exists on both Instagram and Facebook. Simple white text on a black background tells anonymous stories of racism and discrimination, and the beauty in the genuine absences thereof. Timmins is Listening is always looking for new contributions from people who are



ready and willing to share their experiences. If you would like to learn more, please visit our pages @TimminsisListening or e-mail the moderators at info@timminsmulticultural.ca.

In September 2020, we launched the ESL Pilot program, thanks to our program partners at the Timmins Learning Centre and all of the partners who made up the ESL/FSL Task Force. The in-person program is operating very smoothly in spite of COVID-19 and we are testing several elements that we will look to improve upon in the winter semester.

Also in September 2020, we launched the first ever virtual Welcome to Timmins LIVE. This event played out over the course of several weeks and featured more than 40 non-profit organizations operating in Timmins. We featured 10 organizations every week and concluded with a special francophone edition on November 4th during National Francophone Immigration Week. Recordings of the events are posted on our Youtube and Facebook pages @WelcometoTimminsLIVE.

Finally, we have been working with a dedicated group of individuals on projects such as the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, a Timmins Volunteer Resource Centre, and the Anti-Racism Action Program. It has been a very different year for all of us—filled with Zoom meetings, virtual conferences, and adapted service delivery. All things considered, it was a very productive and forward-thinking year for the Timmins Local Immigration Partnership. Thank you to all of the community partners who made all of these things possible.

Mike Scott



A Message from the Welcoming Communities Intern

“The object of education is to teach us to love what is beautiful.” —Plato

This has been a year of many changes. With the rise of the COVID-19 virus we have all learned new ways to approach situations. I appreciate the opportunity to join the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre again, this time as a staff member. Throughout my BA I was able to complete a placement with this team and I thoroughly enjoyed it! I was thrilled at the opportunity to join the team full time after I completed my Master’s degree. In my role as the Welcoming Communities intern, I am under the guidance of Vindra Sahadeo. I am focusing on providing services to newcomers, while also responding to enquiries, whether they be in, or out of country. I have been working with Ashley on the Canada Connects program, which focuses on skills that volunteers can bring, while integrating newcomers. I have been assisting in the development and implementation of this matching program between immigrants and volunteers.

In addition, I have the opportunity to act as a liaison between the North Bay & District Multicultural Centre and North Bay City Hall. In this regard, our goal is to assist settlement needs, while also ensuring retention in North Bay and area. In this capacity, I have been working with the Economic Development Department, on marketing for the Move Up program as well as the potential to create a virtual tour for our city. This partnership closely aligns with my goals to ensure attraction of our area, as well as the retention of immigrants.

One of my goals is to continue partnerships with North Bay’s school boards as we plan to run a virtual youth group this year. Through zoom meetings and social media, such as Instagram and Tiktok we can engage our youth in various ways, and even the youth in Timmins and area since virtual connecting allows for geographic distance.

I give my thanks to the team in welcoming me back, and for their continual guidance and resourcefulness. I am excited to help launch new events, continue partnerships and be a part of positive successes for all community members.

Looking forward to success in 2021

Marly Hill



A Message from our Welcoming Communities Coordinator

Giving encouragement to others is a most welcome gift, for the results of it are lifted spirits, increased self-worth, and a hopeful future.” -[Florence Littauer](#)

The year 2020 was my first year with Timmins and District Multicultural Centre and it was a challenging year with the COVID-19 pandemic situation. However the experiences, barriers, and challenges during the pandemic played a vital role in the growth and development of our system at various levels.

In my new role as a Welcoming Communities Coordinator with the Rural and Northern Immigration Partnership (RNIP) in Timmins, I liaised with several candidates who received RNIP community recommendations, offering them opportunities to be matched with a volunteer and connecting them with settlement services. It was very exciting building relationships with the community partners, international clients and volunteers.

At the end of August 2020, I was able to conduct an event with a large group of people (44) called “Onam celebration”, which is a Hindu festival celebrated in Southern India. As the year progressed we were able to provide Christmas gifts to our clients who are under the age of 16 and do the ground work to initiate a home catering project for our clients.

The continuous virtual interaction with our clients helped reduce their concerns and fears, and thereby their comfort zones increased steadily. Monthly follow up with the clients about their concerns, successes and challenges helped solidify the relationship between the client and myself.

We also continue to work with our community partners by participating in workshops and taking part in virtual activities. Within the short span of time I also recruited and trained some volunteers from the community.

Overall, it was a successful year and I am thankful to everyone who has helped in making our community a welcoming and safe space for newcomers and their commitment and dedication to newcomers. I hope that 2021 will be less challenging with the virtual involvement, and look forward to the new projects.

Bincy Kurian



A Message from our ESL Instructor

Do you know what a foreign accent is? It's a sign of bravery. – Amy Chua

2020 was indeed a year full of unprecedented challenges in our professional and personal lives as we had to adapt to the new circumstances due to the pandemic.

As classes throughout the country moved online, North Bay & District Multicultural Centre's ELP (English language practice) through Skype continued to be a platform of language learning for our clients of Canadian Language Benchmark levels 1-3. Those who needed access to language learning from far and wide were able to benefit from the online sessions and the learning resources available to them.

The online participants were of diverse backgrounds: from Syria and Iran and Latin America. They joined the English Language Practice via Skype as there were no other alternatives or access to another English language program in their area. Their goals for learning English varied: to study English for the purpose of employment, to join an ESL program at a college, to pass the citizenship test, or simply to be able to connect with others.

Our sessions are unique because we have small groups of learners at a time which are usually comprised of family members, and hence, they receive feedback on their progress regularly. This approach has been very successful this year as I observed that the learners felt more confident in using and improving their skills. Our activities focus on developing the four skills: speaking, reading, listening and writing through various themes. Some activities include using online apps to practice the language.

The program's goal has been to help our clients to reach a CLB level 4 so that they may have access to more resources such as the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. Their interest in the language made it easy for them to improve quickly to obtain the necessary language and intercultural skills. We enjoyed such success because the ELP program focused on the clients' needs.

Despite the challenges we encountered in 2020, I am grateful and honoured to have been able to lead the online ELP sessions at NBDMC. I believe we are well positioned to continue enhancing our program and take on the challenges ahead.

Ziyaad Rajabalee